

2014 – 2015 Peace River Report No. 31

A ground observation on March 29 located the ice front at approximately km 398.5 (3 km downstream of the Highway 2 bridge in the Town of Peace River) at 07:50 MST. Since yesterday's observations, the ice front has been receding at a rate of approximately 16 km/day. Temperatures in Peace River are forecast to remain slightly above seasonal over the next few days. Given the above seasonal temperatures this spring, the breakup of the ice covers on the Peace and Smoky River is occurring approximately 2 weeks ahead of average.

From what's visible from the ground, the ice cover along the Little Smoky River appears to have broken up, and the channel is open with some remnant ice along the banks. Small ice runs and jams continue to occur along the Smoky River as the deteriorated ice weakens and releases. Water level gauges suggest localized ice movements, but water levels remain generally low. Breakup remains primarily thermal and there is minimal snow left to generate runoff and force ice movement. As the ice covers on the Smoky and Heart Rivers continue to break up, ice may be observed passing through the Town of Peace River over the next few days.

Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, and BC Hydro are in contact regarding river ice conditions and operation of the BC Hydro Peace River facilities.

Observation Details

- March 28, 2015 – Ground observations

Peace River

- A ground observation from the Shaftesbury Trail at 15:42 MST located the ice front at km 384.9 (10 km upstream of the Town of Peace River).
- Open leads were observed from km 385 to km 390 and from km 390.3 to 392.
- A ground observation from the Judah Hill at 19:00 MST located the ice front at km 390 (5 km upstream of the Town of Peace River).

Smoky and Little Smoky Rivers

- Observations at the Hwy 49 bridge over the Smoky River at Watino (km 65) showed a short ice jam in the bend downstream of the bridge at 19:00 MST. Water levels rose by approximately 1 m.
- Remnants of an ice jam were observed along the Little Smoky River at Hwy 744 (km 24.5). The channel was open upstream and downstream of the bridge.
- Observations at the Hwy 49 bridge (km 60.5) over the Little Smoky Rivers showed the remains of an ice run, with open water upstream and downstream of the bridge.

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development,
Communications Division

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- March 28, 2015
 - A ground observation from the Town of Peace River at 07:50 MST located the ice front at km 398.5 (3 km downstream of the Town of Peace River). The ice front is progressing on the West side of Bewley Island
 - A small accumulation of brash ice and debris was observed under the Highway 2 bridge in the Town of Peace River (km 395) this morning. No significant increase in water levels were observed.
 - Ice in the North Heart River continues to melt. Although water levels have risen since early this week, there is sufficient space in the channel to pass flows.

Photo #1: Looking upstream (east) from the Hwy 49 bridge across the Little Smoky River (km 60.5). Flow is from right to left. March 28, 2015.



Photo #2: Small ice jam located downstream from the Hwy 49 bridge across the Smoky River (km 64). Flow is from bottom to top. March 28, 2015.



Photo 3: Small accumulation of brash ice and debris at the Highway 2 bridge through the Town of Peace River (km 295). Flow is from right to left. March 29, 2015.



Photo 4: Ice front location on the Peace River (km 398.5) as seen from the Town of Peace River. Flow is from right to left. March 29, 2015.



Temperature Forecast

The following table contains Environment Canada's observed and forecasted daily maximum and minimum temperatures through to Saturday, April 4th.

Day	Date	Location		
		High Level	Peace River	Fort St. John
Yesterday	28 March	9.9 /-8.5	10.8/2.1	11.8/2.6
Today	29 March	9	10	11
Monday	30 March	9/-5	9/0	8/0
Tuesday	31 March	4/-3	6/1	4/1
Wednesday	1 April	-1/-7	2/-3	2/-5
Thursday	2 April	-1/-14	4/-8	6/-6
Friday	3 April	1/-10	7/-5	5/-6
Saturday	4 April	1/-10	6/-6	3/-6
Average Max/Min for 28 March		4 / -10	5/ -6	5 / -5

The next observation report is expected to be posted on or before March 30th.

Observed Peace River Ice Front Locations 2014-2015

